

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1                   1. A method of treating postoperative pain in a patient in need of such  
2 treatment, which method comprises administering to said patient a buprenorphine-containing  
3 transdermal dosage form prior to surgery.

1                   2. The method of claim 1, wherein the buprenorphine-containing  
2 transdermal dosage form is applied 12-96 hours prior to surgery.

1                   3. The method of claim 1 further comprising the administration of a  
2 second buprenorphine-containing transdermal dosage form for a second dosing period post-  
3 operatively, wherein said second dosage form comprises the same dosage of buprenorphine  
4 as, or a greater dosage of buprenorphine than, said first dosage form.

1                   4. The method of claim 1 further comprising extended subsequent dosing  
2 periods with subsequent dosage forms for a given time period as needed by the patient to  
3 achieve desired analgesia.

1                   5. The method of claim 1, wherein the method further comprises a rapid  
2 dose escalation of buprenorphine patches to achieve the desired preoperative dosage level,  
3 wherein the method involves:

4                   (a) administering to the patient a first buprenorphine-containing  
5 transdermal dosage form for a first dosing period that is no longer than 5 days;

6                   (b) administering to the patient a second buprenorphine-containing  
7 transdermal dosage form for a second dosing period that is no longer than 5 days, wherein the  
8 second dosage form comprises the same dosage of buprenorphine as, or a greater dosage of  
9 buprenorphine than, the first dosage form; and

10                  (c) administering to the patient a third buprenorphine-containing  
11 transdermal dosage form for a third dosing period, wherein the third dosage form comprises a  
12 greater dosage of buprenorphine than the second dosage form, and the third dosage form is  
13 the desired dosage level for the postoperative pain control.

1                   6. The method of claim 5, wherein the method is initiated 4-10 days prior  
2 to surgery.

1                   7.       The method of claim 1, wherein said dosage form comprises at least 5  
2       mg of buprenorphine.

1                   8.       The method of claim 3, wherein said second dosage form comprises 10  
2       mg of buprenorphine.

1                   9.       The method of claim 3, wherein said second dosage form comprises 20  
2       mg of buprenorphine.

1                   10.      The method of claim 3, wherein said second dosage form comprises 30  
2       mg of buprenorphine.

1                   11.      The method of claim 3, wherein said second dosage form comprises 40  
2       mg of buprenorphine.

1                   12.      The method of claim 1, wherein said surgery is a simple surgery.

1                   13.      The method of claim 12, wherein said simple surgery is arthroscopic  
2       surgery.

1                   14.      The method of claim 12, wherein said simple surgery is an excision of  
2       a mass.

1                   15.      The method of claim 12, wherein said simple surgery is hernia repair.

1                   16.      The method of claim 1, wherein the surgery is spinal fusion.

1                   17.      The method of claim 1, wherein the surgery is intrathoracic surgery.

1                   18.      The method of claim 17, wherein the intrathoracic surgery is  
2       coarctation repair.

1                   19.      The method of claim 1, wherein the surgery is pelvic surgery.

1                           20. The method of claim 19, wherein the surgery is transabdominal  
2 hysterectomy.

1                           21. The method of claim 1, wherein said transdermal administration is  
2 produced by a transdermal system selected from the group consisting of a topical gel, a  
3 lotion, an ointment, a transmucosal system, a transmucosal device, and an iontophoretic  
4 delivery system.